

IN TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S
PATRIOTS

(Mr. ROGAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, 200 years ago George Washington, in his farewell address, said that the love of liberty was interwoven into the ligament of every American heart.

Our country has changed much over the last two centuries. But one thing that has not changed is the sentiment Washington expressed: The love of liberty still burns in every American heart. On countless battlefields around the world, American patriots for over two centuries have repeatedly taught us the eternal truth: freedom is never free.

We are reminded of their ready sacrifice today, as the Speaker of the House so eloquently noted, as we reflect upon those now who serve overseas in harm's way, and also as we reflect upon the fact that 25 years ago, our first American prisoners of war returned from Vietnam. One of those brave patriots who answered the call of freedom and paid an immeasurable price serves in this body with us today: The distinguished gentleman from Texas Mr. JOHNSON.

I am honored to join the Speaker and my colleagues in paying tribute to SAM JOHNSON, and all those patriots like him, for their heroism, for their sacrifice, and most of all for their love of liberty.

DEMOCRATS' AGENDA

(Ms. KILPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, as we speak, Democrats in the House and Senate are joining the President and the Vice President to talk about our agenda for America. That American agenda includes education, reducing class size, hiring 100,000 new teachers, health care, making sure that people in America can choose their doctor, can receive the quality care that they deserve; also securing Social Security, making sure that it is secure into the new millennium, making sure that we modernize it and to expand it so that 55- and 56-year-olds who have been excluded from their jobs, who have been laid off, can buy into a medical program for themselves and their families.

Mr. Speaker, we stand ready to serve the American citizenry. We are happy today that the Senate and House Democrats are joining the President and Vice President in announcing to America that we will work for them, but we will work in securing and making quality education for all our children.

Mr. Speaker, this is a great day for the American citizenry.

IRAQ

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, the morning papers today recorded that Russia was providing weapons technology to Iraq. We have known for years that China has done the same thing. Does this mean that we must attack them as well as Iraq?

Instead, though, we give foreign aid to both China and to Russia, so indirectly we are subsidizing the very weapons that we are trying to eliminate.

I would like to remind my colleagues that bombing a country, especially one halfway around the world that is not a direct threat to our security, is not a moral act. A moral war is one that is defensive and a legal war is one that is declared by Congress. We should only pursue an act of war when our national security is threatened.

Bombing will solve nothing. It will open up a can of worms. We should not condone it. We should not endorse it. We should not encourage it.

Please think carefully before we permit our President to pursue this war adventure.

REFORM THE IRS NOW

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, just when we thought things could not get worse at the IRS, they have.

I picked up this Washington Post article last week. The title is "IRS Goof Creates Returns That Keep Returning." At first I thought it was a joke, but then I learned that the IRS did make, in fact, a huge goof, about a million packets of 1040 forms sent out to the taxpayers had preprinted address labels. That is not going to do anyone any favors.

The famous world class computer system over at the IRS will read the bar code on the preprinted label and, one might ask, will it then send it to the proper location for processing? No, sir. It will not. It will send the form right back to you. In fact, we can even imagine the making of an infinite loop, with our 1040s just making around-the-world tours, back and forth between our houses and the IRS.

Mr. Speaker, the IRS is still out of control. It is enough. It is time for some radical reform at the IRS.

THE RUSH TO WAR

(Mr. DUNCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, President Bush sent the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and others to

brief House Members prior to and during the previous Gulf War. This has not been done this time.

Most Members of this body know only what they have read or heard in news reports. Why this rush to war? Why all this eagerness to send young American men and women into harm's way? The case has not been made.

I am certainly not defending Saddam Hussein. I voted for the last Gulf War and many have forgotten how close that vote was. But last time Hussein had moved on another country and was threatening others. Many nations, including our own, have weapons of mass destruction, nuclear and otherwise. Has there been any overt action or indication that Hussein is getting ready to use his? We have not been told.

The American people are not clamoring for war, Mr. Speaker. War should be the most reluctant decision we make, and then only when there is no other reasonable choice. As ABC's Forrest Sawyer asked on Nightline last night, Are we about to do more harm than good?

RECOGNIZING SAM JOHNSON

(Mr. LARGENT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my colleague and friend, the Honorable SAM JOHNSON. Twenty-five years ago tomorrow, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JOHNSON) left Vietnam after nearly 7 years as a prisoner of war. He was shot down April 16, 1966, while flying his 25th mission over Vietnam. SAM JOHNSON can teach us all a thing or two about valuing and never taking for granted our freedom because SAM JOHNSON lost his for 7 years.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, if I could, to read one paragraph, an excerpt from his book "Captive Warriors." It says a lot about the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JOHNSON), my friend.

"I turned my attention toward God. When the guards increased their patrols and their vigilance and my talks with Howie had to be stopped, I could still talk freely to God. I knew with certainty that He was present in that dark, cramped closet of a cell. He listened when I prayed. This I knew without doubt. He answered me. When Bible stories and verses of comfort came into my thoughts, I knew He placed them there. I was comforted and encouraged. And I began to know my creator in a way I had never known Him before.

"I know now in retrospect that God's intimate interaction with me in the Mint strengthened me and built my faith so that I would be able to trust him in the darkness of the terrible days that still lay ahead for me."

SAM JOHNSON, a great American and defender of faith and freedom, we salute him today.